REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 and 3-20 were pending in the present application, wherein claim 16 was withdrawn from consideration.

The February 28, 2007 Office Action rejected:

- claims 1, 3-8, 10-13, 15, and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Spargo et al. (USP 4,334,688);
- claims 1, 3-8, 10-13, 15, and 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by either Rogers (USP 6,457,867) or Knepper et al. (USP 6,439,774); and
- claims 9 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over at least one of Spargo et al. (USP 4,334,688), Rogers (USP 6,457,867), or Knepper et al. (USP 6,439,774), as applied to claims 1 and 13 above, and further in view of Ko (JP 59-155621).

Applicant cannot agree with Examiner's rejections for the reasons given below.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) for claims 1 and 10

Claim 1 recites "a bearing sleeve having **an inside wall** surrounding the shaft...a plurality of **first bearing members formed at the inside wall**...a plurality of **second bearing members formed at the inside wall**...complementarily offset from the first bearing members,...a plurality of **first and second grooves in the inside wall** thereof...."

From the above, it is understood that the bearing sleeve of claim 1 of the present invention includes at least the following elements: inside wall, first and second bearing members and first and second grooves.

PAGE 3/8 * RCVD AT 5/29/2007 10:03:50 PM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-2/14 * DNIS:2738300 * CSID:408 919 8353 * DURATION (mm-ss):02-26

Regarding the cited references, the elements 25, 26 of Spargo et al. are axially extending **grooves**, rather than the alleged **bearing members**. Should Examiner interpret portions of the surface 47 of the bushing 41 between the grooves 25, 26 of Spargo et al. as first and second bearing members of claim 1, these portions **are not** complementarily offset from each other. In contrary, in claim 1 of the present invention, it is clearly and positively defined that the second bearing members 140 are complementarily offset from the first bearing members 120. Finally, according to all element rule, the first and second bearing members of claim 1 are different from the inner wall; however, Applicant cannot find any element on the cited Spargo et al. which functions as a bearing member and is different from the surface 47 of the bushing 41, wherein the surface 47 is analogous to the inner wall of claim 1.

Accordingly, claim 1 is not anticipated by the cited Spargo et al., and is thus patentable thereover under 35 USC 102 (b), since Spargo et al. does not teach every elements of claim 1. According to the case law, an anticipation rejection requires that the reference teach each and every elements of the claim under examination.

In Rogers, Fig. 5 thereof only discloses the groove 510, without any disclosures regarding the first and second bearing members of claim 1 of the present invention. Refer to lines 49-51, column 5 of Rogers, "In Fig. 5, a groove 510 extends substantially from the center 512 of the sleeve 514 to the top 520 and bottom 522 of the sleeve 514." Except the above, Rogers dose **NOT** give any other information which can read on the limitations positively and distinctly defined in amended claim 1, such as "***the second bearing members being arranged in circular fashion complementarily offset from the first bearing members***". Although Rogers in Fig. 4 thereof discloses a plurality of grooves 420 which are dispersed at predetermined positions along

PAGE 4/8 * RCVD AT 5/29/2007 10:03:50 PM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-2/14 * DNIS:2738300 * CSID:408 919 8353 * DURATION (mm-ss):02-26

an inner circumference of the bearing surface 414. Rogers still fails to disclose the complementarily offset first and second bearing members formed on first and second ends of the bearing sleeve of claim 1 of the present invention. As such, Rogers fails to disclose each and every limitation of claim 1, and thus fails to anticipate claim 1.

In Knepper et al., the elements indicated by number 32 are spiral **grooves**, rather than the alleged **bearing members**. In addition, since the grooves 32 are spiral, they **are not** parallel to the central axis X of the hub 74. Based on the above reasons and the reasons given in connection with Spargo et al., the cited Knepper et al. does not teach every features of claim 1; thus, claim 1 is patentable over the cited Knepper et al. under 35 USC 102 (b).

Claim 10 recites "...a plurality of bearing members provided at the inside wall,...the bearing members ***extending inwardly toward a central axis of the bearing sleeve***; wherein... the bearing members are provided only at two opposite ends of the bearing sleeve ***as discrete islands isolated from each other***."

None of the cited prior art references has bearing members which are provided at the inside wall of the bearing sleelv thereof and extend inwardly toward a central axis of the bearing sleeve.

Moreover, in Spargo et al., particularly referring to Figs. 1 and 4 thereof, the portions of the surface 47 formed at two opposite ends of the bushing 41 between adjacent grooves 25 or 26, which can function as the bearing members of claim 10, are ***interconnected*** with each other; that is, these portions of the surface 47 are continuous from each other, and are not disposed as discrete islands isolated from each other as positively required and

PAGE 5/8 * RCVD AT 5/29/2007 10:03:50 PM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-2/14 * DNIS:2738300 * CSID:408 919 8353 * DURATION (mm-ss):02-26

clearly defined by claim 10. As such, applicant submits that Spargo et al. fails to anticipate claim 10.

Rogers and Knepper et al. also fail to disclose "the bearing members are provided only at two opposite ends of the bearing sleeve ***as discrete islands isolated from each other***."

Accordingly, claim 10 is novel and patentable over the cited three prior art references.

Patentability of claims 3-9, 11-15 and 17-20

Claims 3-9 and 17-19 are also patentable since each of them includes the novel features of claim 1.

Particularly the limitations of claim 19 that "the bearing surfaces of the first and second bearing members are ***discontinuous from each other***" are not shown in the cited prior art references; thus, claim 19 should bear more patentability weight. Detailed explanations are given below.

In Spargo et al. particularly referring to Figs. 1 and 4 thereof, the portions of the surface 47 formed at two ends of the bushing 41 between adjacent grooves 25 or 26 are ***interconnected*** with each other; that is, these portions of the surface 47 which can function as the bearing surfaces of the bearing members of claim 19 are continuous from each other, and are not discontinuous from each other as positively required and clearly defined by claim 19. As such, Spargo et al. fails to disclose each and every limitation of claim 19, and thus fails to anticipate claim 19.

In Rogers, the portions of the bearing surface 414 (514, 614) which can function as the bearing surfaces of the bearing members of claim 19 are continuous as can be understood from Figs. 4, 5, 6 of Rogers.

PAGE 6/8 * RCVD AT 5/29/2007 10:03:50 PM [Eastern Daylight Time] * SVR:USPTO-EFXRF-2/14 * DNIS:2738300 * CSID:408 919 8353 * DURATION (mm-ss):02-26

In Knepper et al., particularly referring to Fig. 7, the portions of the bearing surface defined between adjacent grooves 32 at two ends of the hub 74 are interconnected together via an inner smooth surface of a non-grooved central section of the hub; thus, Knepper et al also fails to disclose the limitations of claim 19, i.e., "***the bearing surfaces of the first and second bearing members are discontinuous from each other.***"

Accordingly, claim 19 itself should carry more patentability consideration.

Claims 11-15 and 20 which depend on claim 10, should also be allowable, since each of them includes the novel features of claim 10.

Finally, in the present application, the bearing surfaces of the first and second bearing members are discontinuous from each other, as defined in claim 19; the bearing members are provided at two opposite ends of the bearing sleeve as discrete islands isolated from each other, as defined in claim 10. Having such features, a total inner surface area of the bearing members that needs to be ground in a grinding process is greatly reduced, thereby facilitating the manufacturing of the bearing sleeve 10. When the bearing members are ground by the grinding machines, the grinding bits 32 of the grinding machines 30 do not have to penetrate very far into the bearing sleeve 10, and the precision of manufacturing the bearing sleeve 10 is effectively increased. However, each of the cited references (Spargo et al., Rogers and Knepper et al.) does **NOT** have the above-mentioned features of the present application, and accordingly does **NOT** possess the above advantages provided by the present application.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the present application is believed to be in a condition for allowance, and an action to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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